

Remarks

Reconsideration of the application is urged in view of the claim amendments above and further comments below. As the Examiner will see, the Applicant has chosen to proceed with a Request for Continued Examination, particularly in view of the concluding paragraph of the Examiner's arguments spanning pages 6 and 7 of the Examiner's Answer, where the Examiner has asserted that arguments being offered are not commensurate with the limitations in the claims.

In the present invention it is only necessary to transmit one data stream comprising "original" content from a content service provider to a distribution server in a system where a client termination unit (subscriber unit) can be controlled by its respective subscriber to receive/display a conveniently timed staggered one of a plurality of onward data streams from the distribution server, said onward data streams corresponding substantially to the original content from the content service provider and being transmitted from the distribution server offset in time by the distribution server. This is achieved by sending control data from the content service provider to the distribution server containing a single offset value that enables the distribution server to stagger in time the transmissions of the plurality of onward data streams generated in said server from the (single) original content received from the content service provider. Thus, it is an essential feature of the present invention that the single offset value utilized by the distribution server to control the time stagger of the plurality of onward data streams is provided by the content service provider.

Hendricks teaches an operations center providing a programming schedule comprising starting times for the various programs. Thus, each program will have its own start time determined by the operations center which is unaffected by any process performed by the distribution server. It will also be apparent that there can be a multitude of different implicit timing offsets existing between the respective starting times of the various programs scheduled by the operations center, but there is no mechanism for the distribution server to effect any change to such offsets. Hendricks does not disclose sending a single offset value from the operations center to the headend in the manner claimed in the present invention.

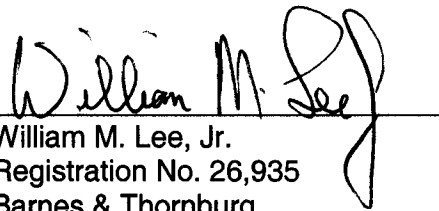
In the case of Hendricks where the timing offsets implicit in the programming schedule are subject to some change, it would be necessary for the operations center to provide the head end with a new programming schedule to affect any such changed timing offsets. In contrast, in the present invention, it is only necessary to send a single new offset value in the control data from the content providing server to the distribution server for an originating data stream to be regenerated by the distribution server as a plurality of onward streams offset with respect to a preceding stream by the new timing offset value.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims, as amended, distinguish from Hendricks and are allowable thereover. As Hendricks is the primary reference in all rejections, it is submitted that all rejections have been overcome.

Further and favorable reconsideration of the application is urged.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William M. Lee, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large, looped "L" and a distinct "Jr." at the end.

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